

Noted Drama Critic Eyes Shakespearean Plays In West; 'Positive Values' Seen

Editor's note: Henry Hewes, drama editor for The Saturday Review, visited the Ashland and San Diego Shakespearean Festivals recently, and recorded his impressions in the magazine, which has an influential and international circulation. His column is republished by permission of The Saturday Review from the magazine's Aug. 23 issue.

WILL O' THE WEST
Of the six Shakespeare festivals now edifying this continent, two are on the West Coast. And upsetting the notion that culture always travels East to the land of cowboys and Indians, the two festivals at Ashland, Oregon, and San Diego, California, founded their Shakespeare factories years before those at Antioch, Ohio; Stratford, Ontario; Stratford, Connecticut; and New York City.

The Oregon Shakespearean Festival began in 1935, in an open-air reconstruction of an Elizabethan stage. (Of course, the reconstruction is hypothetical and contains several features, such as benches built around the two forestage pillars and wide doorways at each side of the stage, that are modern supplements.) Its reason for going back to the old stage was not so much a desire to establish a living museum as it was to make the plays work by forcing the directors and actors to solve the problems of the plays in a way similar to the way they must have been in Shakespeare's day.

Guiding Principle
This gave the festival a guiding principle to hold onto. Furthermore, there was added to this an insistence upon disciplined, articulate speech and strong use of gesture, a directorial staff that

"That hoss just won't carry nuthin' but SANTIAM BLUE LAKE STRINGLESS GREEN BEANS"



STRAIGHT-STRINGLESS ALL MEAT TENDER GREEN BEANS

does not change too much from year to year, and an institute, headed by Dr. Margery Bailey, which does exhaustive research on thorny points within each summer's schedule of plays. Whatever the lacks in a given production, the festival most certainly has its own personality.

This season it is performing "Troilus and Cressida," "Much Ado About Nothing," "The Merchant of Venice," and "King Lear." The latter two plays illustrate one advantage of bringing back key personnel each year. Richard Graham, who played the title role in a previous festival production of the tragedy five summers ago, this season has a second chance. What he learned from his first try has been applied to his new performance. This, combined with his steady accumulation of acting experience, has resulted in what the festival board of directors consider to be the finest production in their history.

Bowmer Liked
Similarly, the festival's producing director, Angus Bowmer, has been working on the character of Shylock over a long period of time. He has not worked selfishly to make the part greater and richer, but rather has tried to find a characterization that would make the comedy work best for its audiences. His Shylock, therefore, tends to be somewhat in the Smith-and-Dale tradition. And even his final exit is a delayed fawning one which achieves a punctuation of laughter with the Duke's words, "Get thee gone... but do it!" The other virtues of this production are Nagie Jackson's Lancelot Gobbo, the best this writer has ever seen, and Margaret Vafiadis' Portia, which combines the hysteria of love with the caniness of a woman who knows how to get her ends.

But there are for the sophisticated playgoer disturbing shortcomings as well. There is much too much grandiloquent gesture, and performing of the meaning of each line rather than the situation in which it is spoken. And in its wish to adhere to the Elizabethan pattern the policy of no intermissions is followed for every play. It is perhaps right to accept the challenge of making each production so exciting that one does not want the distraction of an intermission, but one wishes that the producers would amend their policy when it becomes obvious that an intermission would help rather than hinder.

Difficult Plot
In "Troilus and Cressida" we have a good example. Here is a play that presents great difficulties and particularly needs any help it can get. As directed by James Sandoe, the most effective moments are the tender ones. George Vafiadis is ideal when he speaks of love. And Margaret Vafi-

adis admirably captures the tingling anticipations of a woman who aches to give herself, but does not wish to lose her man by quick surrender. As Pandarus, Michael O'Sullivan achieves a degenerate zeal that he manages to make amusing. But the long councils of war are static and talky.

One comes away from this festival with an admiration for the universally high quality of speech and for the beauty of this Oregon valley town and its refreshing climate (in seventeen years only five performances have been rained out). One also admires the fringe activities, including readings of source material for the plays and the famous Lilliput Toy Theatre of San Francisco, which presents thoroughly delightful performances with miniature cardboard actors and scenery lit ingeniously and charmingly with tiny lights. Yet one wonders if the positive values that have been achieved here would be lost if the Ashland Festival would occasionally invite a guest director to produce a show and allow him to introduce some modern innovations that would make the plays seem less remote to contemporary audiences.

Less Ambitious
At San Diego, California, in a smaller and indoor Elizabethan theatre left over from the Exposition of 1935, the San Diego Community Theatre is offering its ninth annual National Shakespeare Festival. Under resident director, Craig Noel, its program tends to be less ambitious and more alert to entertainment values than its Oregon counterpart. It attempts only the popular plays of Shakespeare, and is less exacting in its discipline. Its actors are promising students, and graduates of the nation's best drama schools, who find the San Diego summer a stepping stone to careers in the professional theatre.

This summer San Diego is seeing "Macbeth," "Anthony and Cleopatra," and "Much Ado About Nothing." Before each show, there is a free pageant on the lawn, or should we say greensward, in which an imperious Queen Elizabeth appears with her retinue and commands dancers, fencers, tumblers, and singers to entertain her. Once inside the theatre the stage appears smallish, and the small auditorium demands a more intimate style of production. The actor is called on for subtlety; while the less experienced actor is not always able to give us that subtlety, the challenge is good for his development.

Young Players
In "Much Ado About Nothing," as directed by Allen Fletcher, two much too young performers, Edward Martz and Donna Carnegie, attempt Benedick and Beatrice. Thus, there are many times when

the acting is overly obvious, with the actors underlining and straining at the making of a point. The best parts of this production are the fun ones: Miss Carnegie's double-take as she peeks back on-stage to observe Benedick's strange behavior, or Mr. Martz's crooning of a song as if he fancied himself to be a Bing Crosby. Ric Lavin, who also plays Macbeth, has a nice dryness as Verges, and Joel Martin's Dogberry is amusingly fatuous.

Both these West Coast festivals are performing useful functions, in the training of actors, and in accustoming audiences to Shakespeare and a form of the open stage. The best performers in each company would be intermingled with those of our most professional Eastern festivals to our advantage.

—Henry Hewes.

Alcorn Unleashes Charges in Debate With Paul Butler

Aberdeen, S. D.—(UPI)—National Republican Committee Chairman Meade Alcorn unleashed a barrage of corruption charges against the Democrats in an unusual face to face debate with his Democratic opposite, Paul Butler, Wednesday night.

The party leaders met in limited debate before the South Dakota Bar Association's annual banquet here. Butler won the flip of a coin and spoke first. Alcorn followed, and then each speaker was allowed five minutes for rebuttal.

Butler opened the debate with a blast at the Eisenhower administration for failure to carry through on campaign promises.

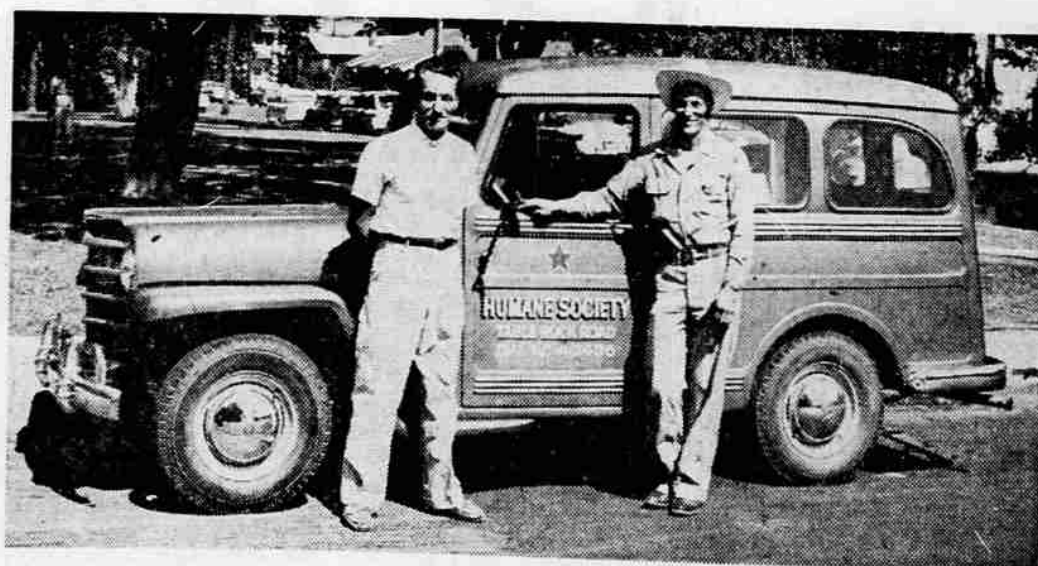
Broken Promise
"Perhaps the most brazenly broken promise of all was the famous Eisenhower pledge to reduce crop surpluses, to raise farm income and farm prices, and to obtain for the farmer his 'full parity' 100 per cent parity with a guarantee in price supports of 90 per cent," Butler said.

He called the administration farm policy the biggest national calamity suffered by any one economic group within our population.

Alcorn, in his opening remarks, defended the integrity of the Eisenhower administration and said 220 separate scandals were uncovered during the administration of President Truman.

No Indictments
"There has not been a single indictment, trial or conviction of even one official of the Eisenhower administration," Alcorn said.

He said the Internal Revenue Service in particular was



NEW OFFICER—Andrew Hawver, Talent, (left), president of the Southern Oregon Humane Society, and William O. Herring, new investigating officer for this district, pose beside the truck used by the district humane society office. Herring is a former U.S. Navy recruiter here. Local humane

society office is located at 2902 Table Rock rd. in Medford. Telephone number is Normandy 4-2406. Any reports of sick or injured animals or of neglect or mistreatment may be made there and will be investigated, Hawver said.

Walkout Against Company Settled

Portland — (UPI)—Agreement to end a three-day walkout at the American Can company plant here was announced Wednesday night.

Members of Local 2070, United Steelworkers of America, refused to report for work Monday in protest over disciplinary action taken last week end against two employees.

Union and management negotiators agreed to submit the incident to normal grievance procedures provided for in the contract. An employer spokesman said the union members would be back on the job today.

Former Vancouver Woman Killed

Ventura, Calif.—(UPI)—A 34-year-old former Vancouver Wash. resident was killed and nine other persons injured in a two-car collision Wednesday four miles west of Ventura on Highway 101.

Dead was Mrs. Lois Ann Johnston of Oxnard, Calif. She lived in Beaverton, Ore., and Vancouver before moving to Oxnard.

California State Patrol officers said one car swerved into the path of the other. Both vehicles were loaded with women and children.

Mrs. Johnston is survived by her husband, Les, who presently is at sea with the Navy, and two children, Bruce, 7, and Leslie Ann, 6.

"shot through with graft and corruption at the very top" during the Truman administration.

Butler replied that the issue of morality in government has been "cynically, ruthlessly and hypocritically exploited by Mr. Eisenhower and his coterie."

"And of course," Butler said, "the chief moralizer of them all was Ike's assistant and Bernard J. Goldfine's helper, Sherman Adams."

Police Prepare Charges in Killing

San Francisco — (UPI)—Police prepared today to file a murder charge against Albert H. Lewis, 48, a brewery employee who confessed strangling his wife and burying her body on the Nevada desert.

Lewis was expected to return here sometime today from Eureka, Nev., where he pointed out to police the lonely grave of his wife, eight miles west of the pioneer town.

"That's where she is," he said, as he pointed to the grave in a dry alkaline gully.

Early Monday morning Lewis telephoned police and confessed he strangled his wife, Dolly, 36, Aug. 5 after a drunken quarrel.

Four days later, he put her body in the trunk of his car and drove to Eureka, 255 miles east of Carson City, and buried her.

The body was taken to Ely, 78 miles east of its grave, for an autopsy.

Nevada and California authorities took brief statements from Lewis to ascertain that the slaying occurred in San Francisco. Nevada authorities said they plan no prosecution in that state.

As the party left the burial scene, Lewis said: "Well, that's it. I'm ready to take my punishment."

Practically all the canned pork exported by the U.S. in 1957 went to Korea, Spain and Venezuela.

Soil Bank Payments To Be Increased

Portland — (UPI)—Soil bank payments in Oregon will be increased next year, it was announced Wednesday.

Oregon's average annual payment rate per acre for land put in reserve will be \$16 compared to the present \$12, according to Joseph E. McBurney of Gaston, chairman of the State Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation committee.

The announcement was made at a meeting here of agriculture leaders from northwest Oregon with state officials.

Opening date for farmers to make inquiries at county ASC offices was set for Sept. 2. Closing date is Oct. 3.

First of Bridge Piers To Be Blasted Away

Portland — (UPI)—The first of four old Morrison bridge piers will be blasted about 4:15 a.m. Friday, Harry Dick, Portland manager of General Construction Co., which is tearing down the old span, announced Wednesday.

Next week blasts are planned on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at the same time to demolish the steel-jacketed concrete shafts.

FOR SAFETY'S SAKE

Buffalo, N.Y.—(UPI)—The Trico Products Corp. here has developed a safety device that automatically locks automobile doors when the engine is started. Some 1959 model cars are expected to carry them.

Committee Hears Progress Reports

Salem — (UPI)—The governor's committee on natural resources Wednesday heard a progress report on the Alsea river basin study.

Executive Secretary Richard Bain told Gov. Robert D. Holmes and the committee that an impoundment study of salmon was getting much attention now.

Bain mentioned that arrangements were being made with an organization called Salmon Unlimited, Inc., which wants to build a number of ponds for fish study. Under the plan, the committee would furnish a fish biologist and two graduate assistants to work with Salmon Unlimited.

The plan touched off a discussion of the proper role of the committee in the Alsea basin study.

Gov. Robert D. Holmes and committee members agreed generally that it was not the intent of the Legislature to set up a basin agency which would be another agency of state government.

The committee plans to ask the 1959 Legislature for about \$250,000 for its various studies, including Alsea, and the governor cautioned members to break down their budget requests by individual projects for the convenience of legislators.

The U.S. has one-third of the world's railway mileage.

Long Beach Youth Taken from Ledge

Yosemite, Calif.—(UPI)—A 17-year-old Long Beach, Calif. youth was hauled 750 feet up the sheer face of Yosemite's famed Glacier Point Wednesday after being stranded overnight on a narrow ledge.

The youth, Bill Beeghley, was cautiously pulled up on a rope by rangers from the ledge where he had become stranded after attempting a forbidden short cut from the peak to the valley floor.

Beeghley was unharmed and suffered no ill effects from his night on the cliff ledge.

Contracts Awarded for Apartment Buildings

Portland — (UPI)—Contracts were awarded Wednesday for the construction of the two million dollar Park Vista apartments, a 10-story tenant-owned cooperative to be erected by the Park Vista Corp., at S.W. Vista Ave. and Park Place.

Completion date for the project is late 1959. Work is scheduled to begin immediately under contracts totaling \$1,921,000 awarded to Hoffman Construction company. The luxury apartment building will contain 60 units.

A total of 1,142 Americans have become permanent residents of Jamaica in the British West Indies during the past five years.

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